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ABSTRACT

Public education in our big cities across the country is fighting for its life. In most urban centers, school systems are faced with enormous deficits in their operating budgets, and there is no tax relief in sight. If we, together, are to rescue public education from its imminent danger of extinction, we must resolve to abandon the present course of educational research, which is too often trivial, petty, and frivolous. We must establish new relationships which will result in improved training, provide relevant information to the administrators and instructors in the school system, and produce results mutually beneficial to the researcher and the worker in the field. Above all, we must pull together what has been done before and pursue what still needs to be done to assure all our youngsters the opportunity for excellent education. [Not available in hard copy due to marginal legibility of original document.] (JM)

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Urban Education:
Its Challenge to the Research Community

by

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It is a strange experience for me to find myself here this evening to talk to you about the needs of urban education and how you, as educational researchers, can assist it. I am not now, nor have I ever been, engaged in serious research. Most of my professional life has been spent in the classroom, in the principal's office, or in the administration building of a large school system. I find that my schedule is subject to frequent change, that I must deal with unexpected crises, that my life has far more variables than it does constant or controllable factors. But I have been asked, from that perspective, to speak to you about the public schools.

Let me state at the outset that public education in our big cities across the country is fighting for its life. At this point, I have no reason to be optimistic about its chances. In most urban centers, school systems are faced with enormous deficits in their operating budgets, and there is no tax relief in sight. Bonds to fund capital programs are difficult to sell. New teachers' contracts will soon have to be signed--and current demands puts their costs at millions in additional money we simply don't have. Meantime, the flow of Federal funds, which produced such high hopes, is slackening. The state governments show no more sign than does Washington of making education a priority in concern, commitment or cold cash.

Demands on school systems multiply daily. We find that we are running programs for every age group from pre-schoolers in

day-care centers to senior citizens in golden-age groups. We provide lunches and sometimes breakfasts; we bus millions of children and provide eye examinations or diphtheria shots to millions more. Our curricula must be revised continually, and new courses added, some vital and some less so. We try to enrich, and motivate, and develop character, and give skill training. And our resources, already strained to the limit, are badly dented by inflation.

But the tragedy, of course, lies not in the frustration of harassed school administrators or in the disillusionment of idealistic young teachers. The real cost is being borne by those whose voice is somehow seldom heard in the halls of Congress or city councils: the youngsters who are now too frequently cheated of a first-class education, and who may soon be denied even minimal schooling.

It is our children who will pay for the confusion or carelessness or cynicism of a society which spends more for trash removal than it allows its Federal government to spend on education. Indeed, despite the increased efforts of the last few years to provide equal educational opportunity to all, the impact has been negligible. Teenagers are still dropping out, tuning out, or waiting out the time until they get a diploma. High school graduates are still hanging on street corners, beginning to realize that all those years in school didn't really prepare them for the good life. Younger children are still giving up the meaningless struggle to master fifth grade social studies, because

they can't read at first grade level--or to learn sixth grade science, when no one made sure they knew even third grade arithmetic. And before suburbanites write off the dismal picture I am painting as "not their problem," let me remind you that drugs and V.D. and juvenile crime are terrifying parents whose children are in our "best" schools.

Education is not a topic on which I can, at this point in time, speak with much hope or enthusiasm--although I believe profoundly that the solution of educational problems is basic to the survival of our cities. Unless we manage to educate our young for meaningful jobs, for full participation in our national life, we will not have cities--or housing or pollution or traffic--to worry about.

I do not mean to indicate that other problems do not require serious and earnest attention. I am simply stating my conviction that our national priorities are upside down, when the President can cry "inflation" over an additional $1 billion for human resources, but rest content with $80 billion for destructive weapons. I am pointing out that something is wrong when at least four countries--including one of the largest (Russia) and one of the smallest (Israel)--have been able to wipe out illiteracy, while the affluent United States has millions of non-readers. Something is wrong when the new administration in Washington calls together a special task force to recommend Federal action on urban education, and then neglects to publish the report of its several months of labor. Something is wrong when the Commissioner of Education, with noteworthy aptitude for putting first things first, attempts

to launch a Right to Read campaign, and finds he must fund it from the soft spots in his already limited budget.

It seems only fair that I make my biases clear: I am impatient, I am angry, I am frustrated. But more than all these, I am desperate. My appeal to you this evening must be regarded as that from a relative of a fatally ill patient who has no time for scholarly discussions of historical causes or statistical surveys, worthwhile though they may be at other times for other persons. Like that desperate relative, all I want to know is "Can you help?" "Can you find a cure?" "Is there any hope at all?"

We are here as educators with widely differing experience and points of view. But too often in large conventions like this, we tend to confirm the worst caricatures of ourselves by playing the oneupmanship game, by promoting our particular bias with ears closed to new ideas, by pulling the cloak of professionalism even closer, by refusing to deal with real kids and real problems. I commend to you the experience of a good friend of mine, Vern Cunningham, Dean of Ohio State's College of Education, who took over the principal's job at an inner-city junior high school. Shaken by his few days on the front line, he wrote in the November '69 Phi Delta Kappan: "We have no experts in this sort of urban education anywhere. No one has the answer. Anyone who thinks he has is a fool." [1] But he and others like him are at least asking the right questions. That, I believe, is the place to begin.

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1. Luvern L. Cunningham, "Hey Man, You Our Principal? Urban Education as I Saw It," Phi Delta Kappan, November 1969, p. 128.

You will no doubt assume that I am about to make a plea for applied as opposed to basic research. I have some familiarity with the arguments on both sides. Indeed, I am sure they have often been heard in this very forum. For instance, Robert Ebel of Michigan State ably defended the case for applied research at your convention three years ago. Others, such as the members of the Committee on Educational Research of the National Academy of Education, point out that the terms "applied" and "basic" are difficult to employ precisely. The Committee recommends distinguishing decision-oriented from conclusion-oriented investigations, largely on the basis of the amount of freedom allowed the investigator.

I am really not interested in promoting one kind or the other. How academic institutions allocate their funds and personnel is a topic in which I am neither interested nor qualified to speak. In school systems we are of necessity more likely to put our limited resources into research which will help answer very specific questions: we cannot afford the luxury of basic research. I sometimes think the term to which I'm most attracted is what Willard Waller, author of the classic Sociology of Teaching, called "Systematic Wondering!"

A marvelous cartoon in the current Phi Delta Kappan illustrates my impatience with ponderous arguments over semantics. One fellow is saying to another as they are both about to disappear in a sea of something-or-other: "Whether it's quicksand or mud is purely academic. The point is we're sinking." [2]

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2. Phi Delta Kappan, February 1970, p. 302.

That's it exactly, ladies and gentlemen: The point is the public schools are sinking.... Financial crises, legislative apathy, racial conflict, parental lack of confidence in the schools, teacher inadequacy, student rebellion--you name a problem, and we've got it.

The question I would like to pose to you tonight is whether you, as members of the educational research community, are able and willing to rouse yourselves to help save public education in this country today. If you saw a child break through the ice or a boat capsize, your first and instinctive reaction would surely be to reach out, throw a rope, form a human chain, find a way of getting help to save that endangered life. In other words, you would establish a relationship. And so I would like to suggest that your effectiveness in helping public education survive will be in direct proportion to your willingness to enter into and maintain new and dynamic relationships with educators who are on the firing line. Whatever the particular shape or purpose of these new relationships, they are crucial to the survival of our joint concern, education.

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Training

First of all, new relationships are required if training for educational research is to produce the quantity and quality of researchers we so desperately need today. Most of you are university scholars and professors. I would hazard a guess that although almost all are engaged in research bearing on some aspect of the learning process, not a great number are--or perhaps ever have been--directly involved with large school systems. In part, I

know this is because there just haven't been opportunities for would-be urban researchers to get on-the-job exposure to city school systems.

After all, school district research departments are either relatively new on the scene or have only recently expanded their responsibilities to include serious research efforts. Philadelphia's Office of Research and Evaluation is still undergoing a kind of shakedown cruise. Yet it has moved miles beyond the situation of four years ago, when the school district spent less than half of one per cent of its budget (or $650,000) on research. Of that amount, 85% was devoted to the testing program--and another hefty amount paid for the production and distribution of blank forms, (an activity apparently labeled 'research' because no one could fit it in elsewhere!). This left a grand total of well under $100,000 for the entire research effort--for a student population of close to 300,000.

Although the budget is now considerably greater, it is far from the level necessary to provide a school system of this size with the research capability it should have. Ironically, areas like research and planning are not only kept on bare subsistence rations: they are the first ones to be attacked when the financial squceze is on. It is a constant battle to convince the tax paying public--and our own administrators--that the need for accurate data, decent evaluation, and planning in terms of stated priorities is more (not less) critical in a time of diminishing resources.

School system research is not only new, but extremely vulnerable. It is also not very good--although it would be unrealistic indeed to expect smooth, efficient functioning from an office beset by low budgets, personnel changes, skyrocketing local demands for assistance and new Federal research requirements.

This situation I am describing hardly seems like a proper "commercial," calculated to bring you running to us. But the fact is that research offices in school systems offer perhaps the best possibility for training researchers for the urban scene. Educational realities cannot be understood from the isolation of the campus. To know about education, you must know how teachers, pupils, parents, and administrators feel and think, and that kind of knowledge doesn't come from a book or even from a lecture.

I think it is essential to note, too, that the view from the top is a crucial perspective for educational researchers. Vital as it is to understand the day-to-day classroom experience, I cannot overemphasize the importance of seeing the system as a whole--comprising widely differing functions and personalities and tradition; besieged by pressure groups, parties and political powers; struggling to move backwards, forwards or sideways,--yet frequently incapable of any motion at all.

This is not to say, as too many bright young people might conclude, that we have no need for system or organization at all. On the contrary. But if that system is to be captured and turned around for the benefit of school children, it will have to be done by people who know how it operates, and who are able and willing

to see the linkages between the individual teacher and the local hierarchy, between city powers-that-be and the State legislature.

Perhaps one way of developing educational researchers who can make a real impact on urban schools is by allowing them to obtain on-the-job training while they pursue graduate degrees. Philadelphia undertook such a program last fall, when we agreed to become the school district partner with the Research Council of the Great Cities Schools in a federally-funded program. This program has brought a group of research interns in for two years of simultaneous field experience and academic work. On the whole, this is turning out to be a remarkably satisfactory arrangement: the school district is getting some badly needed additional personnel; the young interns are obtaining relevant training (including large doses of the frustration with which urban administrators must deal daily!); and--hopefully--we are together paving the way for a more effective national research capability in urban education.

I think this program deserves careful study and implementation, with possibly many variations, elsewhere. And so I urge you to examine your university's research training programs; explore some radically new ideas; and begin to develop new relationships with the school systems near you.

I think few of you would quarrel with my statement that good researchers are in short supply. Whether you read Buswell, Bargas, Clark and Hopkins [3] or any other recent assessment of educational

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3. See, for example, A Report on Educational Research, Development, and Diffusion Manpower, 1964-1974, by David L. Clark and John E. Hopkins (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Research Foundation, 1969.

research manpower, the consensus certainly is that we must train more people, and train them better, if we are to produce significant research for a significant impact on public education. The proliferation of research activities over the last few years has created hundreds of new positions; the demand far outweighs the supply. But training for educational research (like research offices in public schools) continues to receive low priority from the Federal level on down. Even having admitted a need for studies of greater depth and more perceptive analysis, we continue to allow the work to be done by people badly trained or poorly qualified. It seems to me that many more of today's astonishingly perceptive young people might be recruited to a field which emphasizes (or should, anyway!) integrated knowledge rather than narrow specialization and provides an opportunity for important contributions to solving a vital national problem.

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Relevance

A second point I would like to stress tonight is this: new relationships between researchers and practitioners are necessary if research is to provide relevant solutions to the desperate needs of public education. Whether researchers are naive, idealistic, uninformed or just plain ignorant, their lack of knowledge about how schools work frequently creates a very real barrier to productive cooperation between researchers and field educators. Theorizing and abstraction are essential tools for dealing rationally with complex problems. But if abstraction becomes an end in itself, it is of little use in the real world, which is

untidy in the extreme. There are simply too many marvelous studies and data collections which no one--certainly not a superintendent, principal or teacher--ever uses. Their only apparent purpose is that they provide some aspiring academician with his plumage--in the shape of a Ph.D.

I think some of the difficulties which have strained relations between us in school systems and you of the research community are traceable to dependence on the wrong sort of models. That old American rural ethos hangs on in many ways--and one is clearly our continued use of the agricultural frame of reference for research. Somehow we've looked at classrooms or schools as though they were plots of land. We'll just add a little Brand X fertilizer to Farmer Jones' field, Brand Y to Farmer Brown's, and nothing to Farmer Smith's. Then let's see whose corn grows highest. . . or whose reading achievement increases most!

Does that sound familiar? One project director actually tried to get a large complex school district where he was conducting his studies to agree not to change a thing for five years to ensure the purity of his longitudinal analysis! (Presumably he couldn't get anyone to actually stop clocks.) I can't emphasize too strongly how critical it is that researchers understand the complexity of a classroom. There are simply untold numbers of factors, over many of which the teacher has no control, which influence the learning process--hunger, the threat of a gang shoot-out at lunch, trouble at home, health. If you're going to come in to look at that amazingly diverse group of human beings

called Miss Smith's fifth grade, for heaven's sake make sure you know it isn't a tidy garden, where you and Miss Smith alone determine what shall grow and what shall not.

Fortunately, some researchers have recognized the inadequacy, in fact the futility, of attempting to apply a static model to the dynamic school situation. Foremost among these is Frances Ianni, who recommends utilization of anthropological insight and methodology. Anthropology's insistence on field work and the training for participant-observer roles is a much-needed corrective to education, I think. Viewing the school as a culture, an organic and integrated whole, is not a new idea--my old friend Willard Waller was on to that 40 years ago--but it is now respectable academically, thanks to anthropology. And, of course, we also owe to this field the rich possibilities of taking a comparative stance in research, using a cross-cultural perspective, whether based on diachronic or synchronic research.

I should mention, too, the work of Mary Jean Bowman in applying economic analysis to educational problems. Or Charles Bidwell, a sociologist at the University of Chicago and author of "The School as a Formal Organization", who has also brought the insights of his field to education. The important point is that classrooms cannot be (and never have been, with any profit,) approached as though they were cages of laboratory mice or, as I said earlier, plots of tillable soil.

Another reason for the frequent irrelevance of much that passes for educational research is its emphasis on counting things:

people, test scores, desks, windows or what have you. Now I quite agree that social accounting is a useful tool--despite the endless stream of reports, questionnaires, and forms, which is apparently its life blood. But it worries me when data collection is valued more than is a continuing inquiry into the nature and purposes of education.

I suppose that we are in part captives of our history and tradition. You recall Henry Barnard, editor of the American Journal of Education and first U.S. Commissioner of Education. His high hopes--that the fledgling Department of Education might focus national attention on the nature and quality of American schools--were soon drowned in the flood of statistics which has inundated that office ever since. Ironically, when Joseph Rice later tried to turn fact collection to a particular end, he was widely attacked. Having administered spelling tests to some 16,000 pupils, he found that their achievement was not at all related to the formal class time spent on spelling. Leonard Ayers later wryly commented: "The educators. . . united in denouncing as foolish, reprehensible and from every point of view, indefensible, the effort to discover anything about the value of teaching spelling by finding out whether or not children could spell." [4] I guess that relevance, like virtue, must sometimes be its own reward!

A passion for measuring also characterized early attempts to improve local school management, when school surveys by teams of visiting professors were the order of the day. Undoubtedly, the

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4. Quoted in Research for Tomorrow's Schools: Disciplined Inquiry for Education, ed. by Lee J. Cronbach and Patrick Suppes (New York: MacMillan, 1969), p.47.

intent was to gather facts in order to analyze and recommend suitable action--but how many of those studies were conducted by relentless statisticians, who counted anything countable and focused solely on what existed, not on what could or should be.

Quantifying is notoriously easier than attempting to frame and answer the complex questions of purpose and meaning. The temptation to become preoccupied with the numbers game is understandable, but statistics alone cannot provide us with direction. Only a well-reasoned philosophy--or, more likely, an ad hoc response to every new crisis--determine that.

But even when they have a philosophy and a program, educators seem to have perfectly terrible trouble in defining their goals. I am sure many of you have sat in meetings between program planners and prospective program evaluators: one group talks of activities and the other of measurable objectives--and only painfully, if ever, do the twain meet! Sometimes the way out of the impasse is found by asking the activity planners why they want to do a certain thing. Their answer then can be restated as an objective. Using the Provos discrepancy model to test reality against the blueprint may be another useful way of launching a project that has some hope of accomplishing what was intended. There is much you in the research community can do to help us, the frontliners, frame the right questions and clarify our goals and objectives. But not if you are content simply to count, simply to tell the world how well you can add. Instead, force us to ask why? for what purpose? how?

Closely related to the researcher's responsibility for sharpening objectives is that for continuous assessment of whether the program is in fact proceeding as planned. Too frequently, evaluations are made at the end of a project period with the pious--or naive--assumption that all the ingredients called for in the original recipe had indeed been available. Yet the real schools I know lose teachers or don't acquire them on time; equipment doesn't get hooked up; deliveries are delayed; roofs leak, rust corrupts, and thieves break in and steal! But research designs apparently go on forever, immutably and unchangeably.

I think Daniel Stufflebeam's CIPP evaluation model is very helpful just because it focuses attention on what is really happening, not only on what was planned or expected. And Robert Stake's work has also illuminated the field of evaluation by bringing words like "description" and "judgment," "contingency" and "congruence," to the forefront of our thinking about how to assess educational programs.

Educational researchers, then, have a vital opportunity to assist public education define its tasks and measure its progress. School superintendents and principals are, of necessity, so often engaged in the political battle for survival that they neglect, from exhaustion or blunted perspective or lack of time, their mission as educational leaders. It is my hope that you in the research community, moving from the isolation of the university to the confusion and complexity of school systems, will be able to assist in clarifying goals and objectives, in assessing progress,

in recommending change. And I think I can promise that if your voice has the ring of relevance it will carry authority as well.

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Quid pro Quo

From all that I have said thus far, you may well think that I am asking you to abandon your own interests and pursuits in order to rescue public education from imminent doom. Without dwelling on the point that if public education goes down the drain so will a great deal else, let me hasten to assure you that I believe your own interests may indeed be best served by developing good relationships with school personnel. We need to think much more about developing quid pro quo relationships, about how, in Francis Chase's words, to "close the gap between the production of knowledge and its use in education." [5]

Perhaps it is time for the research community to move in its thinking beyond the point of seeking a suitable testing ground and consider its responsibility for providing service. If studying a given problem is worth something to the university, if the data to be ascertained is valuable to it, then surely it can share the responsibility for providing the necessary supports or environment to make the research possible. School administrators are not more open than most human beings to seeking or taking advice from others, but if we will together seek to improve relationships between researchers and practitioners, our children's learning situations may improve measurably.

I referred rather superciliously to our agricultural past a few moments ago. What it does offer us, though, is a precedent

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5. Francis S. Chase, "R and D in the Remodeling of Education," Phi Delta Kappan, February 1970, p. 302.

for the kinds of service which the university could offer the school system today. The history of land grant colleges and the experimental stations is certainly an instructive one. These, and the extension service agents, provided individual farmers with direct links to the findings of agricultural research. So great was their success that production problems were quickly replaced by those of distribution. University R & D centers and the regional educational laboratories were intended to provide similar linkages between theory and practice. If they are to produce results of equally impressive magnitude, developing effective relationships is essential.

To quote Francis Chase again: "The bridging function cannot be served, however, unless these new organizations (labs and centers) are firmly attached at one end to the sources of basic knowledge and at the other end to organizations responsible for operational decisions. There are problems at both ends . . . Yet progress is being made by centers and laboratories which recognize that they cannot achieve their own objectives without establishing conditions basic to mutual trust and reciprocal benefits. . ." [6] That the school needs and research efforts are not better articulated is as much the fault of school systems as it is of the R and D centers and the regional labs. You in the research community can help by ensuring that: 1) projects undertaken by research centers involve questions of major concern and usefulness to school personnel; 2) school personnel be included

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6. Ibid., p. 302

in the planning stage of projects on a partnership basis, not as an after-thought; and 3) realism be maintained about, for instance, costs for financially hard-pressed systems.

Sam Brownell, in his critique of the 1968 D & D center reports, stressed this point: "School relationships, training of school personnel, and considerations of the obstacles which must be removed between acceptance of a preliminary research finding and changing school practice have as yet seemed to receive minor attention in center practice and in future planning. . . . It would seem that all centers face the important task of engineering research findings into school improvement and would be engaged in developing procedures to this end." [7]

I think you also have a responsibility to ensure that projects do not end at the initial research stage, but move on to field testing and, finally, to producing actual changes in school practices.

I like Dr. Brownell's comment that "Dissemination through issuance of reports which are not read is an exercise in futility... (Reports must) be more than for a limited audience which is familiar with newly coined technical terms." [8] I am afraid that educators of all sorts must plead guilty to the count of unnecessarily obfuscating simple ideas with complex and esoteric pedagogese. And university scholars are perhaps too ready to assume their job is done when a paper is published, a speech is made or a seminar held. To train people, to prepare the way for

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7. S. M. Brownell, "R & D Centers and the Schools: A Reaction to Progress Reports," Journal of Research and Development in Education, Summer 1968, p. 178.

8. Ibid., p. 178

change, is a long and arduous task. And the public will not usually respond with the polite applause awarded a nicely polished report or a well-planned conference. But if the work of educational researchers is to have impact, if their results are to make a difference in the schools, the responsibility for follow-through is at least partly theirs.

While I am speaking of the quid pro quo kind of arrangement which I believe will be of mutual benefit to academicians and practitioners, let me mention another relationship which requires radical revision. That is the one between the observer and the observed.

There is, after all, no special honor automatically attached to serving as a guinea pig or laboratory speciman or whatever for scholars. Quite to the contrary, in many people's minds. I think it safe to say that most residents of the black, poor, or Spanish-speaking communities are simply sick and tired of being studied. In some areas, analyses of studies have been made so often that citizen hostility toward being the objects of study has taken on pathological dimensions. I am sure this is at least partly so because the result so often seems to be a new indictment--not of an oppressive society, but of themselves, their life styles, their family patterns or eating habits.

I believe the school administrators, too, are no longer willing to submit students and teachers to research projects--unless, and this is a major qualifier--unless there is something in it for them. If the project will provide data of immediate value to school administrators, if it will involve teachers in useful staff

development, if it will bring in materials and equipment of lasting value, if it will train youngsters in skills or techniques not part of their standard instructional program--then, perhaps, the arrangement between researcher and researched is a quid pro quo sort of thing, and mutually beneficial.

Let me say again: looking at proposed projects in this light does not mean leaving your own interests out altogether. It does not mean turning the university into a service center for the public schools. What I am pointing out is simply that old maxim of human affairs: if you expect to get something out of it, you have to put something into it!

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Synthesizing

Perhaps the most urgent challenge I have to make to you tonight, however, is this: make your research findings available. Pull all the strands together. Let us know in layman's language what it is that looks promising. In other words, take on yourselves the responsibility for synthesizing the results of your work.

The Committee on Educational Research, to which I referred earlier, has pointed out: "There is . . . a tendency to reward novelty. The person who is exploring a new idea or method, even a relatively trivial one, may attract more attention, receive earlier promotion, and get better job offers than a person following a line others have pioneered. There is not much enthusiasm in social science and educational research for replication of inquiries." [9] I am sure this tendency is partially responsible

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9. RTS, p. 225.

for the bewildering variety of research papers and projects.

I must urge upon you, ladies and gentlemen, the realization that teachers, principals and even administrators, hard-pressed by their daily routine, rarely have time or energy to keep up with research reports in esoteric journals. You claim, justifiably, that research findings are not used by the practitioners. Let me suggest that your responsibility in this time of crisis may well be to create vehicles for transmitting your results to those in the field. I think one excellent example of this is Jeanne Chall's work in analyzing and interpreting the experience with several types of reading instruction.

Education is an extremely complex undertaking, and yet everyone is a self-proclaimed expert. We are willing, by and large, to leave science to the scientists and theology to theologians, but when it comes to education, every citizen has a stake, an interest, a need, experience. Despite this, there is a distinct lack of a national perspective, a broad national consensus, on education. As Francis Keppel points out, in The Necessary Revolution in American Education, "the society is by no means clear about the goals it wishes education to serve." [10] Schools were begun to ensure individual salvation, and were later seen as a means of producing social transformation. That the assumptions behind these goals, competition and cooperation, result in awkward contradictions, is rarely perceived.

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10. Francis Keppel, The Necessary Revolution in American Education (New York; Harper and Rowe, 1966), p.5.

The most important service which researchers can perform may well be to press for definitions, for clarity, for serious consideration of national priorities. Our traditional faith in perfectibility and inevitable progress has been badly shaken by the traumatic events of recent years, --but because maturity is difficult to achieve, it is not nevertheless impossible.

As you are aware, the financial crisis of urban school systems threatens to overwhelm them. It is clear that the traditional city tax base will no longer support the ever-increasing demands for city services, including education. But when we turn to state and Federal legislators for assistance, we find that they quite rightly want to know: what works? What programs will pay off? Where will new tax dollars be best spent? And we find, despite all the research, that we have still no clear answers.

Here is where you can help, where you must help. Let me quote Francis Chase once more: "The first requirement is a systematic and persistent assessment of needs for education in the society and the degree to which they are being met by existing institutions and practices . . . (this) is essential to the selection of goals and problems for educational research and development." [11]

If we are, together, to rescue public education from its imminent danger of extinction, we must resolve to abandon the frivolous, the trivial, the petty and the precious pursuits which have been so dear to us. We must establish new relationships which will result in improved training, provide relevant information,

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11. Francis S. Chase, "Educational Research and Development: Promise or Mirage?" Journal of Research and Development in Education, Summer 1968, p.8.

and produce mutually beneficial results. Above all, we must pull together what has been done before and pursue what still needs to be done to assure all our youngsters the opportunity for excellent education.

This, I submit, is the challenge which urban education presents to the research community.

Thank you.

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